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## Catherine L. Kessmeier



### **Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) Acting, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower & Reserve Affairs)**



Ms. Catherine L. Kessmeier is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) and currently Acting, Assistant Secretary (Manpower & Reserve Affairs) (M&RA) for the Department of the Navy (DON). In this role, she is responsible for the overall supervision and oversight of manpower and reserve component affairs of the Department of the Navy, including the development of programs and policy related to military personnel (active, reserve, retired), their family members and the civilian workforce; the and oversight of the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Sexual Assault Prevention Program Office, and Human Resources systems within the Department. Prior to her appointment as the PTDO Assistant Secretary, she was the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, advising the Assistant Secretary in exercising the entire portfolio responsible for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Previously she served as Deputy General Counsel for the DON, assisting with overseeing and coordinating the Office of General Counsel (OGC) legal practice areas and community leader of more than 1,100 attorneys and professional support staff in 140 offices worldwide. Before that appointment, she served as Assistant General Counsel (M&RA) – the principal legal advisor to the Secretariat for matters concerning military and civilian personnel policy, as well as coordinating the efforts of attorneys world-wide in administrative and federal court labor and employment litigation. Ms. Kessmeier was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in January 2013 as the Assistant General Counsel (Acquisition Integrity) for the DON. In this capacity, she served as the DON's Suspending and Debaring Official (SDO) and oversaw the Department's efforts to pursue criminal, civil, contractual, and administrative remedies in all significant investigations of acquisition fraud or corruption.

Prior to her appointment as the Assistant General Counsel (Acquisition Integrity), Ms. Kessmeier served as Deputy Assistant General Counsel (M&RA) from 2009 until 2013. She managed and directed the provision of legal services for the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) as the Mid-Atlantic Area Counsel and Counsel Naval Surface Warfare Center (Carderock Division) from 2005 until 2009. Ms. Kessmeier joined the DON Office of the General Counsel in 1999 as an attorney with the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) where she later served as a subsection head for civilian personnel law and special projects. Ms. Kessmeier also worked as a labor and employment law attorney for the Department of Commerce, Office of the General Counsel, where she provided legal support to the Secretariat, its operating units, and the United States Patent & Trademark Office. She began her federal career as a staff attorney to the Chair of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

Ms. Kessmeier completed the Interdepartmental Honors Program at Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia PA and graduated with a B.A. in Political Science. She earned her J.D. from the Widener University School of Law, Wilmington, DE, where she was the Associate Articles Editor for the *Widener Law Symposium Journal* and an Executive Board Member of the Moot Court Honor Society. She is the recipient of two DON Superior Civilian Service Awards, two DON Meritorious Civilian Service Awards, and a Superior Accomplishment Award from the FLRA.